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Message Text

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21
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 FEA-01 INT-05 OES-03 EB-07 COME-00 TRSE-00

CIEP-01 OMB-01 /093 W
---------- 051547
R 160758Z DEC 75
FM AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4774
INFO AMEMBASSY ACCRA
AMEMBASSY DAKAR
AMEMBASSY COTONOU
AMEMBASSY FREETOWN
AMEMBASSY LAGOS
AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE
AMEMBASSY LOME
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY YOAOUNDE

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEHRAN 12148

LONDON FOR SEITZ; PARIS FOR MELONE

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR; EAID; EGEN; XA; GH; IR
SUBJECT: IRANIAN INVESTMENT IN WEST AFRICA

REF: ACCRA 8137

1. HEAD OF MFA AFTICAN DEPARTMENT KHERADMEH CONFIRMED TO POL COUNS THAT PRINCESS ASHRAF IS PLANNING TRIP TO WEST AFRICA IN JANUARY(PER REFTEL) BUT HE DID NOT KNOW THE PURPOSE OF THE TRIP. NEITHER KHERADMEH NOR THE MINISTRY OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS AND FINANCE'S DIRECTOR GENERAL FOR FOREIGN LOANS KHALEGHI-ROD ACKNOWLEDGED ANY PLANS FOR IRAN TO INVEST LARGE SUMS FROM "ITS
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SHARE" OF THE OPEC DEVELOPMENT FUND IN WEST AFRICA BUT BOTH

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ADMITTED THAT OTHER AGENCIES OR PERSONALITIES OF GOI MIGHT
HAVE PROPOSALS WHICH HAVE NOT BEEN SHARED WITH THEM. KHALEGHI-
ROD TERMED INVESTMENT IN AFRICA AS STRICTLY POLITICAL AND
SAID IT WOULD BE ALMOST NORMAL FOR HIM TO LEARN OF IT AFTER
THE FACT. KHERADMEH SAID GHANIAN GENERAL OKAI, WHOM HE
DESCRIBED AS MINISTER FOR NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND DEPUTY
COMMANDER OF ARMED FORCES, WAS COMING TO IRAN WITH A DELEGATION
IN MARCH ON A VISIT POSTPONED FROM LAST NOVEMBER. GOI MINISTER
FOR PLANNING MAJIDI DISCUSSED WITH OKAI DURING HIS TRIP TO
GHANA LAST SPRING POSSIBLE AREAS OF ECONOMIC COOPERATION AND
KHERADMEH THOUGHT OKAI MAY BRING MORE SPECIFIC PROPOSALS TO
DSICUSS WITH THE GOI.

2. THE DEPARTMENT IS AWARE THAT ACCURATE AND UP-TO-DATE
INFORMATION CONCERNING GOI FOREIGN ASSISTANCE(GRANTS, LOANS
AND INVESTMENT) COMMITMENTS AND DISBURSEMENT IS DIFFICULT
TO OBTAIN. INFORMATION AT HAND CONCERNING COMMITMENTS TO AFRICA
INCLUDE: MOROCCO-$30 MILLION, SENEGAL-$15.7 MILLIONS PLUS
A 50 PERCENT INVESTMENT IN A 60,000 BPD OIL REFINERY NOW
IN THE DESIGN STATE(DETAILS ARE NOT KNOWN, BUT THIS PROJECT
COST PRESUMBALY EXCEEDS $200 MILLION; AN ASSSOCIATED PHOSPHATE
PROJECT MAY ALSO INVOLVE GOI FINANCING.),
SUDAN-$130 MILLION OF WHICH $50 MILLION DISBURSED, LESOTHO-
$1 MILLION, TUNISIA-$4 MILLION, AND ETHIOPIA-$100,000,
ALL DISBURSED. THUS OUT OF OVER $12 BILLION FOREIGN ASSISTANCE
COMMITTED BY THE GOI TO DATE LESS THAN $300 MILLION TARGETED
ON AFRICA.

3. COMMENT: IRANIAN AMBASSADOR TO GHANA AND NIGERIA SHAHROUKH
FIROUZ HAS WELL-ESTABLISHED PENCHANT FOR INDULGING IN WISHFUL
THINKING AND OVERSTATING HIS CASE. WE SUSPECT THAT WITH
RESPECT TO THE ALLEGED $400 MILLION GOI INVESTMENT IN WEST
AFRICA, REPORTED IN REFTEL, HE MAY BE OUT OF TOUCH WITH THE
CHANGE IN THE GOI ATTITUDE TOWARD FOREIGN ASSISTANCE SINCE
LAST YEAR'S EXPANSIVE PHASE. EMBASSY BELIEVES WEST AFRICA
DOES NOT RATE HIGH ENOUGH ON THE SCALE OF POLITICAL IMPOR-
TANCE TO OVERRIDE IRAN'S CURRENT AND FORESEEABLE ECONOMIC
SQUEEZE.
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